

Sentencing Brochure

David W. Barklage
4:21-cr-00272-MTS-1



WAMPLER & PASSANISE
LAW OFFICES

Table of Contents

Biography of David Barklage.....	4
Character Letters.....	9
Family Photographs.....	41

Biography of David W. Barklage

BIOGRAPHY OF DAVID BARKLAGE

David is the President of The Barklage Company, a political consulting firm specializing in strategy for businesses, public policy, and grassroots lobbying. Within his political consulting firm he is responsible for: vendor management, strategic planning, message development, research and strategy development for candidates, committees, trade associations and issue campaigns. He has served as a consultant and advisor to several Fortune 500 companies, numerous elected officials, and various trade associations including: the Regional Business Council, The Regional Commerce and Growth Association, and The National Realtors Association.

David has an extensive background in business. He owned multiple companies, developed multiple commercial properties, and ran a retail business with over 100 employees before building his private and political consulting businesses.

Personal History

David attended Cape Girardeau Central High School and was elected Student Body President. In his senior year of college at Southeast Missouri State University he was elected Student Body President and to the Cape Girardeau City Council, all while serving as campaign manager to the then U.S. Congressman Bill Emerson.

In high school he was active in numerous activities and organizations including: attending Boys State, managing editor for his school newspaper, co-founder of the Parent Teacher Student Organization, president of the Methodist Youth Foundation, junior counselor on the Missouri State Student Council Workshop, Nominated Boys Nation, won State and Regional Mr. Future Business Leader of American, and received the Danforth Foundation "I dare you" leadership award among numerous other awards.

At Central Methodist College he was Dorm President, Feature Editor College Newspaper, Editor Dorm Newspaper, Member of Delta Sigma Psi Local Fraternity, President Pre-law Club, Student Senator, Varsity Soccer, and founder of College Republicans. At Southeast Missouri State University he was Student Body President, President Political Science Club, Chairman Student Council of Presidents, President and Member of Model United Nations Team, College Republican, Finalist Southeast Missouri State University Man of the Year, and President Wesley Foundation.

He attended the Campaign Management College, National Republican Congressional Committee 1984, the Campaign Finance Institute Republican National Committee 1985, and was Co-Chairman Congressional Intern Association.

In his first run for public office, Barklage was elected to two-terms and served eight years on the Cape Girardeau City Council. He served on the Board of Directors of the Missouri Municipal League and served on multiple policy committees of the National League of Cities. At the time

of his election, David was the youngest person in state history to serve as a citywide elected official.

He helped write and pass charter reforms including term limits, ethics reform, public debt disclosure, and financial reserve requirements. He took on corruption and conflict of interest issues of other Council members and investigated fraudulent accounting by the cable industry. He served on the Charter Reform Commission, The Investment Board and the Cable TV Committee.

While on the city council he fought and won approval for investment policies to increase return of taxpayers' dollars and invest more in secure state investment. He supported the first long term Master Planning for roads and transportation, the Airport and capital improvements to save taxpayers money. Barklage founded Vision 2000, a comprehensive community wide planning effort to improve all aspects of life in the community. He pushed for stormwater management and the Cape La Croix Flood Control Project which eliminated flooding in the city's commercial corridor.

Barklage pushed for Charter reforms to improve accountability. During his time he strongly supported: expanding the Historic Preservation and Downtown Revitalization effort, the construction of the Show Me Convention Center and Sports Arena, the creation of the Enterprise Zone, expansion of city parks, and the creation of a Convention and Tourism Bureau to help create jobs.

He worked to improve the local environment by pushing for closure of the city landfill and replacing it with a transfer station and one of the first outstate comprehensive recycling programs. He further supported improvements to separate waste and stormwater by ending dumping raw sewage into the Mississippi River and rather recycling the sludge by injecting it into farmland as a fertilizer.

David Barklage has worked in government on the municipal, state and federal level. He interned for Representative Russell Brockfield while he was the Minority Leader of the Missouri House of Representatives. He served on the staff of United States Congressman Bill Emerson and later on the staff of Representative John A. Sharp.

Barklage was hired by the first Republican Pro Tem of the Senate, Peter Kinder, to the role of Chief of Staff and as the chief strategist to Senate leadership. He worked with a team to reorganize the Senate where he uncovered massive fraud and waste. He built a team to reform the senate administration, to eliminate corruption, reduce committees and staff, and cut significant costs. He served for 16 years as a senior strategist to the Senate Majority Caucus.

Barklage was a General Consultant for Proposition 3, a Constitutional Amendment that increased transportation funding by constitutionally barring funds from being diverted to other government agencies for non-transportation purposes. The passage of Proposition 3 created the largest bonding program for transportation in state history. The Constitutional amendment garnered the third largest winning percentage in Missouri history and the largest margin for a revenue measure.

He led an effort by the Missouri and National Realtors to pass a prohibition of transfer taxes on real estate and property. The Constitutional amendment won by the highest percentage of any initiative since 1932 and overall had the second highest passage in Missouri history at 83.7 percent.

Barklage received national attention for his efforts in a major federal investigation of voter fraud covered by national media; including Fox News and the Wall Street Journal. As a result of the federal investigation and the national news coverage, Barklage helped to end decades of voter fraud in Southeastern Missouri.

Barklage served as a Presidential elector in the 2000 election. He worked on Congressional and State Legislative Redistricting in 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010.

He has led two successful ballot issues that provided funding increases for the St. Louis Special School District funding increased in 2006 and 2012.

Barklage has donated hundreds of hours working with both St. Louis County leaders, from both parties, on planning, budgets, economic development, governmental accountability, and good government reforms. Over the last two years he has donated his time to regional efforts to address critical issues including crime, COVID response, and helped increase cooperation between State and local leaders.

Activities Past and Present

Cape Girardeau Charter Review
City of Cape Girardeau Investment Committee
Senior Member of the Cape Girardeau City Council
Founded Vision 2000, a comprehensive community wide planning effort
City of Cape Girardeau Cable Television Committee
Cape Girardeau Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors Ex-Officio
Cape Girardeau Chamber of Commerce Governmental Affairs and Transportation Committee
Southeast Missouri Copper Dome Society
Greater Cape Development shareholder and member
Cape Girardeau Lions Club
Cape Girardeau Optimist Club
Board of Directors Missouri Municipal League
Missouri Municipal League Committee on Finance, Taxation, and Administration
Missouri Republican State Committeeman
Member Centenary United Methodist Church
Presidential Elector 2000
Cape Girardeau County Committeeman
Officer Cape Girardeau Republican County Committee
Cottonwood Residential Treatment Center Advisory Council
St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association member

Cape Girardeau Cable Television Committee
Southeast Missouri Hospital Association member
Southeast Missouri State University Booster Club
National League of Cities Committee on Energy, Environment and Natural Resources
Appointed by the Missouri Municipal League Board of Directors to the Missouri Task Force
American Association of Political Consultants
National Federation of Independent Businesses
Missouri Petroleum Marketers Association
Missouri Chamber of Commerce

Character Letters

John G. Brunner

September 23, 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I've known David Barklage for over a decade...specifically in the context of my candidacy for the U. S. Senate and years later, for Governor of Missouri. In addition, I had the opportunity to work together with David on many other campaigns and legislative initiatives.

Growing up in a politically engaged Missouri family—My father would often quote from the book, "Politics Is a Noble Calling" ...Yet over the last 50 years, I've had a few misgivings about that perspective!

In my entire career, whether as a U.S. Marine Corps infantry officer, an entrepreneur rescuing a small failing family business transforming it in an industry leader and supporting and traveling with Christian missions throughout the world—I've learned a principle that transcends all situations. I've shared this with family and friends, and particularly, with young people just starting out in their careers. My affirmation is clear, "It's not what you do, (choosing a specific profession), it's all about the quality of the character of the people of which you choose to associate."

David Barklage, because of the quality of his character, has unequivocally earned my respect and admiration. If we were decades younger, and in the Marine Corps together, I would choose him as my "foxhole buddy."

From my personal observations, Mr. Barklage possesses some of the similar attributes of those tireless health care workers who willingly come into contact with infectious diseases in the course of their profession. Or, maybe to add a little levity, David is not unlike the Discovery Channel's host, Mike Rowe, and his series "Dirty Jobs" performing difficult, strange, and messy occupational jobs along with honest, good hard-working employees.

I can recall early on, just a year or two after I met David, asking him a question, half in jest and half serious, "Why do some people not like you?" I further stated, "We could do a lot more for the cause if everyone would 'keep their spears outside the tent!'" He responded with a big smile and said, "Well, first of all, you're right about keeping those pointy ends of the spears outside the tent, but you need a little insight on this."

After being in politics for almost 30 years, one finds themselves on the other side of the table with a number of highly opinionated people. And some of these people can really get upset." And, then with an even bigger grin, he proclaimed, "And no one ever forgets!"

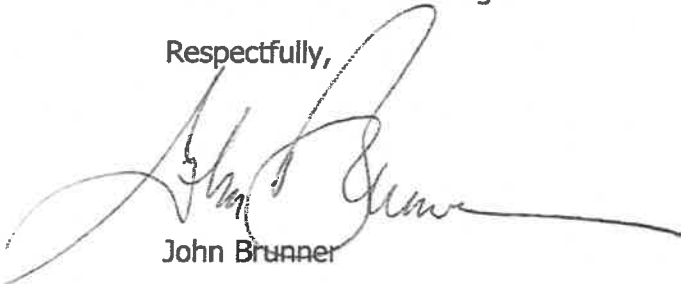
Over the next few years, I observed firsthand how politics seemed to bring out extreme pettiness of those supposedly on the same side. But David was never distracted by the "ground noise" and always kept his focus on the mission with professionalism and grace. Later I was able to observe how several of his former adversaries reconciled to David's good character. In summary, I wouldn't give much weight to those who "don't like" Mr. Barklage. It's just the nature of politics.

Never have I observed David to "cross the line" in all his activities in the rough and tumultuous world of politics. I recall the time when one of my other political consultants wanted to promote an ad campaign that would ruthlessly attack my opponents' character. David stood firm with a resounding "NO"! I then stated, "I'm with David"! And I specifically recall that one of Mr. Barklage's political consultant competitors, representing another candidate, and lacking David's values, where I witnessed first-hand the destructiveness of character assignation—that led to a tragic ending.

While David can be tough with a relentless focus on the mission, he will always be fair and even gracious, to the "other side of the aisle." David is not a "take no prisoners at any cost" kind of person. The opposite is true, he takes personal pride to be a positive role model to all, especially impressionable young people. As I've observed many times in his office, he is an inspiring example of a genuine leader and a compassionate coach to all the volunteers and staff. I would be proud if my own children and even grandchildren would someday have the opportunity to be under the mentorship of Mr. Barklage.

Finally, I've known David Barklage's motivation to be true and honest, and self-less to a fault. He cares—at times, too much. Could he use some "organizational skills"? Of course, but I'm now speaking as a buttoned-up Marine! But as David is a God-fearing, patriotic family man who, throughout his entire life, cares dearly about our community, our state, and our country, and puts his beliefs into action—I can proudly proclaim: It is an honor to stand with David Barklage.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John Brunner", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Brunner



11-19-2021

To whom it may concern:

TIM BRINKER
Presiding Commissioner
of the County Commission

TODD BOLAND
Commissioner 1st District

DAVE HINSON
Commissioner 2nd District

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www.franklinmo.org

My name is Tim Brinker, Presiding Commissioner of Franklin County, President Elect of the County Commissioners Association of Missouri, President of the Board of Trustees for the Brush Creek Sewer District, Past President of the St. Francis Borgia Regional High School athletic association, former City Councilman for the City of Washington, MO (17 yrs) and Mayor Pro tem for the City of Washington many of those years.

My intent of writing this letter is to make sure everyone is aware of the real person David Barklage has been, is, and will be, and to give perspective that needs to be exposed relative to any considerations.

I have known David Barklage for several years, and am a better person today for having witnessed his commitment to his family, co-workers, clients, and peers in and outside of his industry.

David has a real passion for making the world better through his work and lifestyle. I became familiar with his many positive incredible attributes through our many meetings and considerations to make our St Louis region a better place to live safely and happily. His conscientious approach for humane solutions to inhumane cultural and economical issues has helped me see clearly the bigger brighter picture. David saw our St Louis region flailing with crime, misrepresentation, and ultimately population reduction. He took it upon himself to go all in to remedy our regional predicament. He personally formed a think tank of regional leaders, and through his heartfelt leadership and coordination, we have a Senate Committee formed, and legislation pending that will address the many negative issues that are detrimental to St Louis.

By the way, David chose to do this at absolutely no cost! His beliefs and passion rule over any monetary desire most others would have attempted to fill.

David's honesty is equal to his work ethic and dependability. He is kind, considerate, and is a blessing to me and those I represent.

David's mother passed recently and I of course passed along condolences accordingly, but I also did some research looking to see what kind of person his mother was as I did not know her. It didn't take long to see where David's desire to help others came from. His mother was committed to helping others as a therapist in a mental health clinic, and a Girl Scout Executive director and many other incredible accomplishments. I now know where he gets his passion to help people.

I consider David a good friend, and more importantly a good human being that others should meet and know. If they do, they too will be better because of it!

Sincerely,



Tim Brinker

Presiding Commissioner

Franklin County, MO



L. B. ECKELKAMP, JR.
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD AND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

To Whom It May Concern:

Please allow me to introduce myself to you. I have practiced law for more than 50 years and have enjoyed an AV rating from Martindale-Hubbell continuously since 1980. I served as President of the Twentieth Judicial Circuit Bar Association for 12 years. I have been in banking for fifty years. I am Chairman and CEO of the Bank of Washington and Chairman and President of three bank holding companies, which own CNB STL Bank, the United Bank of Union and Bank of Washington. I have also been active in both Washington, Missouri and in the St. Louis community for many years as a businessman and volunteer for many charitable organizations. I served as Chairman of the Regional Business Council where I first got to know David Barklage as our consultant, and since then have had an opportunity to view him from a number of different perspectives.

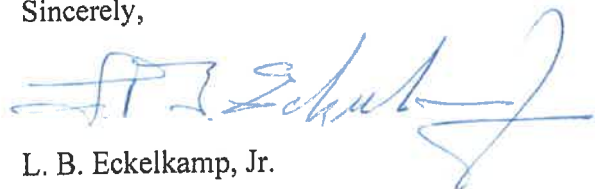
Since he was very young, David demonstrated his leadership and motivational qualities. He was elected student body president in high school and student body president in college. He attended Boy's State. He was Managing Editor of the school newspaper and President of the Methodist Youth Foundation.

Since then, he has had a very successful career as a political consultant and campaign manager. He has gained the respect of Senators, Governors, Congressmen and many State office holders. He is called upon by them for advice and direction.

David enjoys the best reputation in the community as a civic minded and charitable volunteer. He is a man of character. He is respected and held in the highest regard by those who know him. David is a highly motivated, enthusiastic and very successful leader. He is recognized by all as being extremely trustworthy, honest and dependable. I also know him to be a highly ethical, considerate, kind and generous person.

It is my pleasure to give him the highest possible recommendation.

Sincerely,



L. B. Eckelkamp, Jr.

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**Dennis J. Gannon
5226 State Road H
DeSoto, MO 63020**

November 19, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Dennis Gannon and I serve as County Executive for Jefferson County Missouri. I first met David Barklage in early 2018 when I interviewed him to be my political campaign consultant for County Executive. Subsequently, I engaged David as my campaign consultant in my campaign for County Executive of Jefferson County.

My contract for consulting services expired with the end of my successful bid for the Executive job. As a part of my campaign strategies we discussed how can we make our region better. When I speak of our region, specifically, I mean St. Charles, Franklin, Jefferson, St. Louis Counties and the city of St. Louis. This theme continues to be carried on even today.

In the fall of 2019 David reached out to me to discuss improvements to our region and asked if I would be interested in continued dialog with other leaders of the region. I agreed to participate along with the other Republican executives within the region. The nature of our discussions remained about improvement in our region trying and identify what significant positive things we could do to improve life in the St. Louis Region. David's has provided great insight for our discussions with no personal benefit other than wanting a better community, region and state. My relationship with David has continued with no fee to myself nor Jefferson County, Missouri.

I have found David to be a brilliant strategic thinker and I value his insight. His experience and insight have been invaluable to help me serve our Region. I anticipate as we move forward into next year we will continue our discussions. I offer this letter in David's behalf to confirm I have found him to be a valued resource. I trust his advice and insight and I will continue to seek his advice.

Regards,



Dennis J. Gannon



November 23, 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This letter is intended to provide my strongest possible reference of good character for my friend, David Barklage. I have known, worked with, and worked against David for over 25 years in the world of politics. He is a man noted for his care and concern for others and for his kindness and loyalty. Whether we worked shoulder-to-shoulder or, at times, as adversaries, David's sound moral character has always been unquestioned.

In the business of political consulting, I have seen many, many instances where consultants have made decisions which benefit themselves financially instead of what was in the best interests of their clients. I have never seen David act in this manner. To the contrary, he is noted in the industry for his shrewd political mind and for his "client-first" approach. In this regard, he is a widely sought-after member of political teams.

David's sense of loyalty also remarkably stands out in a business where loyalties are often fleeting. On a personal note, I can assure you that David is a trusted friend and ally with whom I genuinely enjoy working. When I build teams to work on campaigns, David Barklage is always my very first phone call.

Over the past year, as David has clearly been under intense personal stress, his professional conduct was truly exceptional. I worked with him every single day and witnessed zero drop-off in his attitude, good humor, or attention to detail. Whatever he may have been dealing with, I can say with confidence that his clients were all very well served. THAT is the mark of a true professional.

As a friend, I am convinced that David has learned a valuable life lesson in the process of this ordeal. I believe with everything in me that he will NEVER make such a mistake again. David is a faithful husband, a loving step-father, and for me, a trusted friend and confidant. I urge you to deal mercifully with this man of integrity who is depended upon by many.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Hancock', written over the typed name and title.

John Hancock
Partner

JOHN W. MAUPIN
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW
567 NORTH SPOEDE ROAD
CREVE COEUR, MISSOURI 63141
(314) 567-0867

September 1, 2021

The Hon. Matthew T. Schelp
District Judge
United States District Court
Thomas F. Eagleton Courthouse

Re: David Barklage

Dear Judge Schelp:

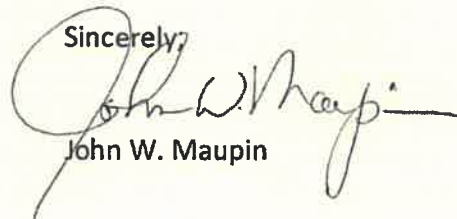
I am writing to attest to what I have personally observed regarding the character of David Barklage.

I met David about fifteen years ago when I decided to run against an incumbent state senator although my senate district was drawn largely in favor of my opponent. I was oblivious to the practicalities of the endeavor, but David took me under his wing and encouraged and helped me at every turn. When the result became obvious, I asked David why he took the time to assist in what was most certainly destined to be a lost cause. He told me 1) that he loved democracy and thought every voter deserved alternatives when they voted, and 2) that he was proud of anyone who would make the commitment to run against the odds.

In the years since, I have worked with David on several projects that were mainly nonpartisan and were aimed at improving the political climate in Missouri by emphasizing accountability and honesty among elected officials. He has always maintained the same resolute demeanor of integrity and dedication to the democratic process.

I do not understand his current dilemma because it is so contrary to the David Barklage I have known and admired. I know he has fully accepted responsibility for his actions and has satisfied the monetary portion of his malfeasance. It is my sincere hope that you will weigh all of David's fine qualities and pronounce a just sentence that will include probation.

Sincerely,



John W. Maupin

THOMPSON COMMUNICATIONS INC.

11/23/2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the president of Thompson Communications, Inc. in Marshfield, Missouri. Our Missouri based company is a national advertising agency and media buying firm which has placed advertising in all 50 states in a period covering over 35 years. It has been our pleasure to work with many hundreds of clients, business associates, consultants, and campaign operatives during that time. This letter is to let you know about one with whom we have worked closely for over 20 of those years; David Barklage.

We immediately found David Barklage to be an asset of great value on any campaign team. His understanding that clients need to win in a manner which leaves them in the best position to govern, and in a manner that moves Missouri in the correct direction for its citizens, was as refreshing as it was unusual. Whether dealing with the person at the drive through window of a fast-food restaurant (we have been on plenty of calls when he went through the drive-throughs), a first-time candidate running for state representative, or the governor of our state, David has a gentleman's approach to his interactions. This respect for the dignity of the individual regardless of formal title is a trait missing in too many others.

David wants to win, but he has never asked me to violate the law, nor have I seen him break the law to that end. In fact, when David oversees a campaign, he often recommends as one of the first hires an accomplished attorney to make sure the campaigns for which he is responsible stay within the letter of the law.

David is as fierce a combatant for his candidates and issues as anyone alive. He is also far more successful for them than almost any other consultant with whom we have worked. His success rate at times has caused others to be jealous, and occasionally, the losing side sees him less favorably. However, in truth, he has just been a better strategist, more closely in tuned with the electorate, and with a better vision of seeing the proper path to victory. He wins within the rules by figuring out how to grow coalitions, not tear people apart.

Over the years we have worked together, David has grown from being just another associate and ally, to a friend with whom we can share our true goals for America, for Missouri, for people we respect. More recently, he has served as free mentor to my son who works in the company with me. David has been giving a free advanced course in general consulting to my son. He has plenty on his plate, but he has gone out of his way to counsel the next generation. We now regularly work with several other consultants and company executives who started by working for David's firm. It is uncanny how often we end up in the same campaigns. That they have gone on to excel in their specialty of service is a tribute both to them and the great training they received while working for David.

Communications, Marketing & Media Services

200 W. Jefferson Street • P.O. Box 5 • Marshfield, Missouri 65706 • (417) 859-5428 • Fax: (417) 468-7577

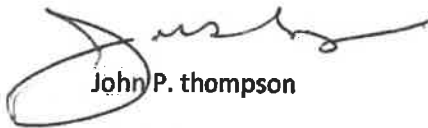
Around our office, we refer to David as one of the true "Boy Scouts" in our business. He is always "prepared", and we have found when he promises something, he delivers.

I have gotten to a point in my career that I don't have to work for or with people I don't like, trust, or think have their heart in the right place. Originally, as an idealistic young man, I got into our business knowing that if we put good people in government, government would get better for the people. David has proven over the years to share this goal, even when it cost him money to do so. Most in our industry are motivated by the competition, or purely by making more money, but not David. David is a patriot soldier, working harder and smarter than the other side, to leave the world better than he found it.

Few people truly know how much David Barklage has personally done to raise the potential of our state and nation. But for over more than 20 years, it has been my privilege, honor, and good fortune to have observed how many times his character has been an example that has lifted others to be better, and his work ethic and skills have allowed good people to do great things for our state and nation.

It is an honor to be able to draft this communication to share my personal knowledge of David as being at the very top of his field and someone with whom I would trust my last dollar.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John P. Thompson", with a large, stylized initial "J" and "T".

John P. Thompson

President

Thompson Communications, Inc.

JEFFREY N. DAVIS

5818 Pebble Creek Drive
Wardsville, MO 65101
JeffDavis46308@gmail.com
(913)-626-2545

October 28, 2021

RE: Letter of Reference for Mr. David Barklage

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter of character reference for Mr. David Barklage. I have known Mr. Barklage for more than twenty years. I first met David in the Summer of 2000 when I was working for then State Senator Steve Ehlmann and he was working as a political consultant for various candidates. Subsequently, David and I both worked for Missouri Senate President Pro Tem Peter Kinder in various capacities and we have been friends ever since. David is someone I have called on for both professional and personal advice. Having known David for more than two decades, I can state unequivocally that David Barklage is a man of character.

On a personal level, I know at least a half dozen people who owe their careers and livelihoods to David Barklage. Over the last twenty years, he's helped dozens of young people find internships and land their first jobs out of college. Many of those young people also became my friends. I have seen David hire people when they really needed a job. I have seen David show the patience of Job when someone screwed up and I wanted to fire them. David has been a mentor to me and to countless others over the years. He takes calls from people we haven't seen or heard from in years and still helps them.

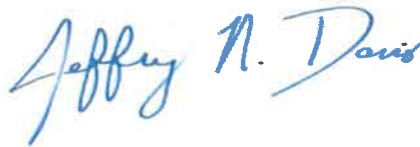
David personally helped me learn some of the most important professional lessons of my career. I was a 28-year-old staffer when Republicans took the majority in the Missouri Senate. Overnight, we became responsible for governing and passing an \$18 billion budget. David was the person who showed me how to start with the end in mind and reverse-engineer a plan to successfully complete the budget on time. David taught me how to do the impossible by breaking a seemingly impossible problem down into manageable pieces and solving it. David impressed upon me the importance of compartmentalizing disputes with political opponents while working with those same opponents to do what's right for the people of Missouri. Most importantly, David helped me see that if the team is successful, everyone's successful.

Professionally, I became Chairman of the Missouri Public Service Commission in January 2005. That winter, we were facing a crisis – natural gas prices were at record highs, Missouri had more than 500,000 households not earning \$20,000 a year and I was deathly afraid hundreds of thousands of people weren't going to be able to pay their natural gas bills. I went to David for advice. David advised me to get in front of the issue, to warn the public and that's exactly what we did: we did an earned media campaign that drove down natural gas consumption in Missouri by 8 billion cubic feet. To the best of my knowledge, that's still the largest decline of natural gas consumption in state history. Collectively, Missouri natural gas users saved more than \$100 million and it would have not happened if David had not pushed me outside my comfort zone to do something to help people.

In conclusion, David Barklage is one of the most conscientious people I know. He's a deep thinker, he's just not good at paperwork. Never has been. I think he's learned his lesson.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter and please do not hesitate to call me if you have further questions about the David Barklage I've known for more than two decades.

Sincerely,



Jeff Davis, Esq.
Missouri Bar #46308

cc: David Barklage



CHARTON
COMMUNICATIONS & CONSULTING

November 22, 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

My name is Scott Charton. I am CEO of Charton Communications & Consulting, a media communications and consulting firm based in Columbia, Missouri. In this capacity, I have worked for more than a decade as a colleague of David Barklage for mutual clients in business and in nonpartisan ballot issue campaigns. I have known David for some 30 years, having first met him when I served from 1989-2005 as a correspondent for The Associated Press in Missouri, covering politics and government. David is a Republican and I am a political independent. But we have found common ground in pursuit of good public policies, and we have become good friends.

I respect David as a man of good character. David is dedicated to his family; kind and considerate, he is unfailingly eager to help others who are in trouble or facing challenging circumstances. He has been a positive, patient and energetic mentor to a generation of young people working in public service and politics. I have been a witness to David quietly helping people in trouble, many times without their knowledge, and seeking nothing for himself in return. For example, I have seen David provide help, work, and mentorship to a mutual friend who rebuilt his life from an abusive childhood and substance abuse to becoming a productive citizen and family man. I believe David helped save this man's life.

In my professional capacity, I have seen David's tireless hard work on behalf of clients and our common causes. I believe David has many more years of positive contributions ahead, and I am proud to call him my friend today and my friend tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Scott Charton

Scott Charton
5808 South Bethel Church Road
Columbia, MO 65203
573-864-9672



Rainford & Associates, LLC

To Whom It May Concern

My name is Jeff Rainford. I am the principal of Rainford and Associates, a top flight St. Louis government solutions, public policy, and communications firm. Before that, I was chief of staff to the mayor of the City of St. Louis for 14 years, the longest tenure in the City's history. It was, to say the least, the hardest job I have ever done.

During my tenure as chief of staff, it was my job to deal with all kinds of people. Some of them meant well, others were out for themselves, others were some of both. During that time, Mayor Slay and I were more than willing to call out or refuse the entreaties of people we thought were bad for the City. We were no naifs.

During my time in the mayor's office and since, I have had a professional relationship with David Barklage. Never at any time did Mr Barklage ever come close to asking for anything or saying anything that even approached an inappropriate line. When we discussed public policy, whether we were in agreement on an issue or not, he always approached it from the angle of what was best for the City, the Region or the State. He was also transparent about revealing his own personal or professional interests and conflicts.

He never lied to me. He never misled me. He has never said anything that made me even uncomfortable. I wish I could say that for everyone I've had to deal with it in public life.

A lot of people in Mr. Barklage's profession act like puppet masters, hiding in the shadows, undermining governments, and making a fortune for themselves. That is not Mr. Barklage. He has been willing to openly stand up against bad politicians— including the former St. Louis County executive and Missouri governor— knowingly making powerful enemies. That does not excuse what he has admitted to this court. But, it is one strong piece of evidence that on balance, he is a positive force.



Not all of Mr. Barklage's ideas made or make sense to me. I have had to say no to him. But, I also have heard from him some of the most brilliant proposed solutions to intractable public challenges from education, to economic development, to regional governance. Mr. Barklage makes important contributions to the political and civic health of our region and our state, and should be allowed to continue to do so.

I do not know the factual basis for the legal issue before you. I do know that none of us want our entire lives to hang on the one big mistake we've made.

I thank you in advance for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,

Jeff Rainford
Principal

November 19, 2021

To whom it may concern,

I am the founder and CEO of Capitol City Research. My company is a national research company doing business in over 38 states. I also am an ordained Southern Baptist minister who has been preaching the Gospel for the past 8 years in central Missouri, leading two congregations as pastor.

While I enjoy the blessings I have today, my life did not start as rich. I am from Stigler, Oklahoma. My family had nothing. Most of the time growing up, we were on welfare. My father was abusive to my mother, my siblings and I, leading to my mother to file for divorce. She remarried to an even worse man, who kicked me out of the house when I was a senior in high school. I stayed with a Sunday School teacher of mine until I graduated from Stigler High School in 1992.

I met David Barklage in January 1996, when upon completing my education at College of the Ozarks, David hired me for an internship for the MO House Republican Campaign Committee, which he led at the time. This was my first job out of college, and I worked for him off and on from that point for 18 years, at which point I formed my own company.

Those 18 years he helped make me the success I am today. When I came to work for David, I was a very green college graduate, broke, and clueless in many ways on how the real world operated. I had many people who I encountered initially that tried to come after me personally and professionally. Perhaps because of my less than privileged background, I wasn't part of the "in crowd" in GOP politics, and David protected me from those people and gave me the chance to grow professionally.

Several times he gave me a place to live to help me financially. When I wanted to work in Jefferson City, he recommended me for multiple jobs which helped me grow professionally. If a job did not work out, he would rehire me and help me get back on my feet.

He was very patient with me when I made mistakes and gave me encouragement when I succeeded. David taught me many things in life, such as working until the job is done and not having a 9-5 mindset and learning how to pick my battles.

During that entire time and even today he takes time to mentor and support me.

Having David as a mentor helped me grow not just professionally, but as a person, and I will be forever grateful to him for giving me a chance to become a better man. He encouraged me to start my own business and worked with me countless hours over many years to prepare me for success.

I will tell you this, my story is not unique. There are people all over this state that he has helped like me time and time again. Harry Truman said if you want a friend in politics, get a dog. He never met David Barklage.

My firm is one of the fastest growing opposition research firms nationwide, and I wouldn't be in this position if it weren't for the mentorship, advice, and friendship of David Barklage.

Sincerely,

Willis Jones

CEO and Founder, Capitol City Research



September 23, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Andy Blunt, and I am a professional colleague of David Barklage. While much of my interaction with David is due to work, our relationship is one of genuine friendship built on decades of time spent working together to make our communities better for Missouri families.

I voluntarily reached out to David to ask if there was anything I could do to help him in his current situation, and he mentioned the possibility of writing to the court. I do so without hesitation or concern of reproach. I am proud to know David Barklage. I get more than I give to our friendship which is more than you can hope for in life.

In 1998 I graduated from college and wanted a job in politics independent from my family connections. My parents and I spent much time and consideration evaluating what opportunity was best for me and for my personal and professional development. Ultimately, I accepted my first ever job offer from David Barklage. I have never regretted that decision.

Working for David changed my perspective in politics from the vantage point of a family member of a candidate. I was able to see the perspective of the staff members who spend countless hours working for causes they believe. David was a mentor to me and reinforced the ideals taught to me by my family that most people in politics, regardless of their ideology, want to make our country a better place and that we often all agree more than we disagree.

David always shared with me his belief in family, civic responsibility, being considerate to others and hard work. As a young impressionable staff member, I was always impressed by David's even-tempered approach, and he never once asked me to do anything that I believed even bended the rules of morality.

David does have some qualities I admire that perhaps in this instance did not serve him well. He is a big picture person who tends to leave the details to others. David places trust in other people to do what is expected of them. At the same time, David is a smart person who learns from his experiences, he never makes the same mistake twice, and is genuinely motivated to do good for himself, his community, and other people.



I have always and still do hold David in very high regard. I have turned to David for advice in both my personal and professional life and his counsel to me, while sometimes not what I wanted to hear at the time, has always served me well. I am confident through this experience David has learned a host of valuable lessons.

I am hopeful David can put this episode behind him and return to making positive contributions to his community and his peers.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andrew B. Blunt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Andrew B. Blunt
Chairman and Chief Operating Officer
Husch Blackwell Strategies, LLC

September 18, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Chip Casteel and I live at 623 E. Madison Avenue, Kirkwood, MO 63122. I was born in Columbia, MO in 1950 and graduated from the University of Missouri (BS-1972 and JD-1978). My career service includes Counsel to Governor Christopher S. Bond (1981-1985); Vice President of Law & Public Policy for MCI Telecommunications Corporation (1985-2002); Senior Vice President of Supply Chain Management for Express Scripts, Inc. (2002-2006); and Senior Vice President of Public Policy for the St. Louis Regional Chamber of Commerce (2007-2014).

It is with sincerity and conviction that I submit this letter on behalf of David Barklage, who I have worked with and collaborated with for more than a decade.

Mr. Barklage and I met during the Missouri legislative process of 2011, when the St. Louis Regional Chamber was actively supporting a proposal (known as the "Aerotropolis Bill") that was intended to help turn Lambert Airport into a global freight hub. Mr. Barklage had been engaged as a consultant by supporters of this legislation, and as such he and I were in regular contact over a period of many months. At all stages of his involvement, I found Mr. Barklage to be dedicated, insightful and candid. I also noted at the time that others in our advocacy coalition were likewise impressed with Mr. Barklage and his dealings with us.

Since that time, and particularly since my retirement in early 2014, I have had numerous and continuing opportunities to consult and collaborate informally with Mr. Barklage on a wide range of state and regional economic development, governance, and political issues. As I civic volunteer, I have at all times and in all instances found him to be generous with his time, trustworthy with our confidences, and honorable in his intentions and actions.

Over the years I have come to trust Mr. Barklage implicitly, and he has never let me down.

Sincerely,

C.K. (Chip) Casteel, Jr.
MO BAR No. 27244 (Retired)



Jefferson City | St. Louis
www.PalmStrategic.com

November 2, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

In November of 2011, I made the second of two major career changes in my young life. I had made the decision to not seek re-election to the Missouri State House of Representatives in order to serve my colleagues as the Executive Director of the Missouri House Republican Campaign Committee (HRCC). Since that time, I have seen a lot of personal success. In 2014, our organization spearheaded the effort to increase our Republican majority in the Missouri House to a historic high 118 seats. In January of 2016, my Political Director at HRCC and I formed our own political and issue consulting company, Palm Strategic Group. In the years since, we have established ourselves as one of Missouri's most successful political consulting firms.

In addition to leading scores of local, state, and federal election candidates to victory since leaving the Missouri House, I have also had the opportunity to collaborate with political professionals from all over the world. One of those, David Barklage, has been a chosen colleague, mentor, and dear friend. I only knew David by reputation when I began at HRCC; he was widely considered Missouri's most brilliant campaign mind, and he was one of a few consultants that advised HRCC. David developed strategy and messaging for several of our toughest and most high-profile races, and I grew to respect him immensely. When we launched Palm in 2016, we shared clients for Missouri Governor and Missouri Attorney General with David, and I realized that I could learn a lot from his years of experience; since that time, I have typically spent one day each week working at his office and collaborating with him on races whenever possible.

While my respect for David as a political consultant is immense, it is the least of the reasons I have for writing this letter. Our weekly meetings evolved from mutual work-related interests; over the years, we became friends. David was very generous with his time and advice. As we became closer, our meetings expanded to include long lunches and insight into our lives outside of politics. I have been fortunate to meet and get to know David's daughters; after a bit of time, I came to learn that his daughters were not his biological daughters, but rather, young ladies he had chosen to help raise and support from a prior relationship. I learned from others of the numerous instances when David helped out friends, colleagues, and even strangers, both

professionally and personally, when they needed it most. I began to trust David with very personal details from my own life as I grew to know him to be honest and caring.

In late 2019, my wife of 17 years let me know that she wanted to separate and move toward divorce. I was devastated and blindsided. I had never struggled with mental health issues, but I slipped into a very deep depression and was hardly functioning. I could not bring myself to tell my family because I was so embarrassed. I told two people, my business partner and David Barklage. In the summer of 2020, my wife proceeded with the divorce paperwork, and I was having a particularly difficult night. I called David at around 11:00 pm because I knew I needed to talk to someone. He calmed me down over the phone and drove an hour to my hometown to sit with me for hours in the middle of the night in a church courtyard. I will never forget his compassion and kindness for me that night – the absolute worst night of my life. I am honored to call David a colleague and mentor, but I am most honored to call him one of my dearest friends.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Scott Dieckhaus". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Scott Dieckhaus
Founding Partner | Palm Strategic Group

THE LIMBAUGH FIRM

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

EST. 1916

October 6, 2021

Re: David W. Barklage

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my strong support for David Barklage. I have known David most of my life. Our families went camping together when we were young and we attended the same schools through high school and college.

After graduating from law school, I served as a law clerk for Judge Stephen Limbaugh, Sr. for two years before moving back to Cape Girardeau. After several years in private practice, I was appointed Circuit Judge to fill an unexpired term. The following year, I had a contested election for a full six-year term. David ran my campaign.

Even though we were life-long friends, I could not imagine the amount of time and energy he was willing to devote to my campaign – all on a volunteer basis. He spent hours and hours strategizing about campaign themes and designing all of my printed materials, including yard signs, large signs, brochures and newspaper advertisements. His skills, dedication and attention to detail surpassed my highest expectations. And it worked, as I was able to win a very difficult race.

Although David later moved to Jefferson City and then St. Louis, he returned to Cape Girardeau regularly to help care for his mother, who still lived alone but needed assistance with grocery shopping and taking care of things around her house. David was somehow always able to make time to come to Cape to help his mother.

Eleven years ago, I was elected to the Board of Governors of The Missouri Bar. My Bar involvement has caused me to have contact with quite a few legislators from around the state while advocating for legislation being supported by The Missouri Bar. Many times, I have mentioned to legislators that I am from Cape Girardeau and that David Barklage is a friend of mine. Almost immediately, the response has been to tell me (sometimes in great detail) how David helped them with their election, communicate with constituents, or navigate the various strong personalities in Jefferson City.

NANCY L. BROWNE

JOHN W. GRIMM

LUCAS M. HALEY

JOHN D. HARDING

BOB I. HOWARD

DIANE C. HOWARD

R. MICHAEL HOWARD

JEFFREY J. KOCH

DAVID S. LIMBAUGH

STEPHEN N. LIMBAUGH, SR.

J. MICHAEL PAYNE

CURTIS O. POORE

CHRISTOPHER B. SIDES

JOHN C. STEFFENS

EDWIN DEAN WHITE

RUSH H. LIMBAUGH
1891-1996

RUSH H. LIMBAUGH, JR.
1918-1990

JOSEPH J. RUSSELL
1923-2006

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jgrimm@limbaughlaw.com

OVER
100
YEARS

October 6, 2021
Page 2

The recurring theme is David's generosity. Whether he is helping an old friend, taking care of a family member, or assisting clients with their professional needs, David goes "all in" on any project in which he is involved. I do not believe his personal gain is the primary, or even significant, motivation for anything David does.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John W. Grimm", with a stylized flourish at the end.

John W. Grimm

JWG/sj



To Whom It May Concern

My name is Larry W. Keating, I have been the Broker Owner of RE/MAX Jefferson City Real Estate Company for the last 29 years, I'm 71 years old and I live in Jefferson City, MO. I am a Past President of the Missouri Association of REALTORS®, a Past Regional Vice President for the National Association of REALTORS®, and just this year became the 99th REALTOR® and only the 3rd Missourian, in NAR's 115-year history to be awarded NAR's DSA (Distinguished Service Award). I have also received numerous awards from RE/MAX which include the Broker Owner of the Year for RE/MAX International in 1996.

I first met David Barklage in 2008, when the Missouri Association of REALTORS® appointed me to be President of Missourians for Fair Taxation assigned to run a Constitutional Amendment Campaign to ban Real Estate Transfer Taxes in Missouri. At the recommendation of our 45-year lobbyist Sam Licklider, I interviewed David and hired him to be our chief political consultant. David and I worked for the next two and a half years with a team of six employees and consultants to win that campaign. I then hired David to be our consultant again through MFT (Missourians for Fair Taxation) to help us defeat several ballot issues that dealt with taxes and real estate from 2010 through 2015. In 2015, I again hired David and his team to run a second Constitutional Amendment Campaign to ban Taxes on Services, and I am proud to say that in 2016 we were again successful on that project.

Over those years my relationship with David and his wife Audra, who was a former employee at the Missouri Association of REALTORS®, has become very close and personal. I believe that because we have so many of the same beliefs, morals, and ethics, which I value highly on my list of what makes an honorable person, David and I soon became good friends.

Something I truly admire about David, is that he likes to win, but he is not willing to win at all costs. Many times, in our work together we had to make decisions that could have hurt our competitors, but David and I were always in agreement that we were not going to run negative campaigns. We always took the high ground, and to this day I am thankful that we were able to win those campaigns in this way. I personally know many politicians, and David is a better person than any I have ever met.

To share with you my relationship with David on a more personal level, four years ago my wife Sharon A. Keating was diagnosed with stage four cancer and given only months to live. With David helping us navigate through the red tape, we were able to get her into treatment at Barnes with the right doctors which I believe prolonged her life. My wife lived until July 17th of this year, which I will

RE/MAX Jefferson City
2316 St Mary's Blvd., Suite 200, Jefferson City, MO 65109
Office (573) 761-3400



always be thankful for our added time. David was always there for us every time we went for treatments, he would take off work to bring us lunch, go to dinners, or just come sit with us for long periods of time. Since her death, he has called me every couple of days and when he is in Jefferson City, he stops to visit.

My wife Sharon was a highly decorated REALTOR®, she was a Past State President, was appointed to the Real Estate Commission for 20 years of which 15 of those years she chaired that commission and was appointed by both Republican and Democrat Governors. She felt the same way I do about David, and I believe she had the best personal reputation of any REALTOR® in Missouri.

For David, family is the most important thing in his life. As his mother aged and had health issues over the last decade, David has been devoted to spending as much time as he could with her and was always on top of all issues concerning her care. Taking care of people close to him just comes naturally for David over all other obligations, and I have watched him sacrifice money and time for his friends and family on numerous occasions. He has done that for my wife and myself many times over the years because he cares about us more than making another dollar. That is part of what makes David special.

Most of my recent conversations with David have been about life, our history, and families. We seem to focus on these things that are important to us and not so much the business side. My wife and I are both ordained Elders in the Presbyterian Church and I can tell you that to me a true sign of David living a Christian life is seen in how he treats people. The only issue I ever had with David is that he tends to be late for meetings, but because my wife had the same flaw, I can get past that.

David has heard me say this on many occasions, as I have gotten older, "I have chosen to surround myself with people that 'Have a True North Star'" for me that means their hearts are in the right place and they are good people. I have no problem telling anybody that David Barklage has a 'True North Star' and I am proud that he is my friend.

In closing, I could give you fifty more stories, but they would just be redundant. The examples I have provided should show you that I think very highly of David Barklage and how important he is in my life and how important he is to so many others.

Thank You for giving me this opportunity to tell you about my friend David!

Larry W. Keating

RE/MAX Jefferson City
2316 St Mary's Blvd., Suite 200, Jefferson City, MO 65109
Office (573) 761-3400

St. Louis County Council

Ernest G. Trakas

St. Louis County Council, 6th District



COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
LAWRENCE K. ROOS ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
41 S. CENTRAL AVENUE
CLAYTON, MISSOURI 63105

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314 / 615-7890 Telefax
E-mail: etrakas@stlouisco.com

October 1, 2021

Thomas F. Eagleton Federal Courthouse
111 S. Tenth Street
Chambers – 14.182
St. Louis, Missouri 63102

RE: United States v. David Barklage

To Whom It May Concern

I am a practicing attorney in St. Louis, Missouri. I have tried cases in the United States District Court for Eastern and Western Districts of Missouri, and argued matters before the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals for more than thirty years. As the above letterhead reflects, I also currently represent the citizens of south St. Louis County on the St. Louis County Council. I write today to share some insight into the man and character of David Barklage.

I met David Barklage five years ago during my initial campaign for the County Council. I didn't run for office to pursue a political career. I ran to give back to and serve the community that has given so much to me. David Barklage embraced and encouraged my motivation. He understood my desire to serve. David willingly provided, and continues to provide, his expertise and insight without request or interest in compensation. Nowhere was this more evident than during my tenure as Chairman of the Council's Ethics Committee during its investigation into former County Executive Steve Stenger's award and execution of County contracts. During the Council's inquiry I was subjected to a questionable recall effort and a specious quo warranto action seeking my removal from office. Throughout this time David Barklage graciously provided counsel, advice and encouragement, all without compensation. David Barklage worked with council representatives, from both parties, to provide research and analysis that assisted the council and its leadership to uncover significant corruption. His interest and motivation was, and remains, assuring honest and effective governance for those who matter most - the residents of St. Louis County. Over the course of that time, I came to know David Barklage as a candid, honest, humble patriot who cares greatly for this country.

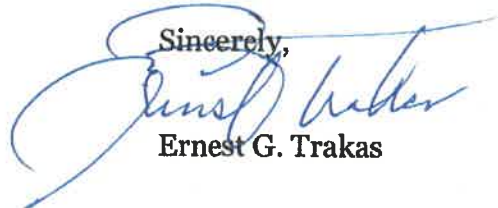


In keeping with the commitment to candor, honesty and accountability I have come to know in David Barklage, he has accepted responsibility for his failure to pay taxes due the federal government, and has pled guilty for doing so. It is now for the Court to determine the fair, just and appropriate consequence.

Currently, David Barklage has been donating countless hours to advise regional leaders on reducing crime, increasing transparency and accountability, and is helping to create innovative solutions to move the region forward. Neither justice nor the people of St. Louis will be served or benefit from the incarceration of David Barklage. Indeed, the opposite is true. During this troubling, tumultuous time, when good governance and peoples' trust in government is all but nonexistent, what does it profit the citizens of Missouri to deny them the benefit of David Barklage's expertise, counsel and guidance? I respectfully suggest and urge the court to suspend imposition of sentence and place Mr. Barklage on probation for an appropriate period of time.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my thoughts on sentencing in this case.

Sincerely,



Ernest G. Trakas

November 19, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

I am the Human Resource Manager at Chemline, a custom chemical formulating company in north St Louis City. I was Vice President of Operations for Missouri Association of Realtors, serving over 20,000 members, when I met David. In both jobs, I've dealt with a lot of different people and I realize the importance of knowing the person they are below the surface. I am also David Barklage's wife. My hope in writing this letter is to give you an inside perspective as to who David truly is as a husband, son, father, and friend.

I was previously married for 20 years to a Missouri State Highway Patrolman. While we remain friends today, I was determined upon the conclusion of that marriage to be single for the rest of my days on earth. Because of that marriage, along with losing my father to suicide when I was 14 years old, I am quite skeptical and mistrusting of men. I tell you my history because it still astounds me that I was lucky enough to meet someone as exceptional as David with whom I get to share a happy and loving life quite unlike anything I have ever known before.

I still vividly recall the first time I met David. There was something so uniquely different about him and I was surprised by my own reaction to our first introduction. He is well spoken, well mannered, incredibly funny, highly intelligent, very quick witted. But more importantly he is genuinely the best person I have ever met. His compassion and consideration for others, especially those whom life has treated unfairly, is unparalleled.

Indeed, one of the first things I noticed about David was his kind and thoughtful spirit. He has been a dear friend and mentor to dozens of people in the time that I've known him. Many of his hires are people who have not only benefited from his knowledge and expertise, but also from his consideration of making certain they have ample opportunities to better themselves, personally and professionally. He quite selflessly has encouraged numerous staff to move on to bigger and better job prospects, not because he doesn't need their talents in his own business but because he cares more about them as a person.

When we first started dating, we were skeptical about introducing each other to one member of our families. Mine was my oldest son who has since been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. I spent several extremely difficult years with my son being in an almost constant manic state. When I finally did introduce David to him, he was able to help me in ways with my son that no one else ever has including getting my son to accept the mental health diagnosis and treatment that has dramatically changed all our lives. Both of my sons love David dearly and have greatly benefited from his advice, attention, and love for them.

The person David was hesitant to introduce me to was his mother, Barbara. I am very grateful to have met and been able to spend time with her before she recently passed. It gave me a special insight to how David's upbringing formed the man he is today. She was a woman of very strict standards and conditional love. I saw firsthand how harsh she treated him with her unreachable expectations. No matter what he did or said, she would constantly find fault with him and nothing was ever enough. I believe this is the reason it is extremely important to David to be appreciated and valued for who he is while never expecting even a simple thank you. You will not find a single person who has freely given the hundreds of thousands of hours of time he has in an effort to make Missouri a better place for all who call it home. Yet he would never seek an ounce of recognition for his many accomplishments.

David moved to Washington during his college years and worked on the hill as a congressional aide. He left that job to move back to Cape Girardeau because his grandparents were struggling with their health and needed his help. He did not think twice about leaving his opportunity there to come back for his family and stayed in Cape Girardeau helping care for his grandparents until both passed several years later.

His dedication and love for his mother is a remarkable story in and of itself. In the early 2000's, Barbara was on a trip to New Zealand when she suffered a massive stroke. David worked endlessly to arrange for her to be transported back to the United States and home where she could get the best care possible while having loved ones nearby. He picked her up at the airport and transported her to the hospital in Cape Girardeau where she lived. Her condition worsened and she spent almost two months on life support in the ICU. David drove back and forth from Cape Girardeau to Jefferson City almost daily during that time. The doctors recommended that Barbara be removed from life support; every single family member and even her close friends supported the decision. David found an alternative in a St. Louis Clinic that specialized in getting people off life support. He moved to St. Louis to be close to her care facility. After nearly six months had passed, his mother awoke. Barbara completed a lengthy rehabilitation and was able to return to her home in Cape Girardeau. David was responsible for making all the health care arrangements for her to be able to do so. Once she was home, David spent well over a decade driving from St Louis to Cape Girardeau two or three times a week to take his mother to doctor's appointments, hair appointments, church and to get her prescriptions, library books and groceries. He covered many of her bills including in-home care for 15-plus years.

I remember during one of our earliest phone conversations he was at his mother's house one evening preparing food for guests who were arriving shortly for Barbara's monthly bridge club. He would also take these elderly ladies out to dinner, acting as both escort and taxi driver. He took her to visit her daughters and grandchildren on holidays. For many years while his sisters were busy with their work and raising kids, David was the sole provider for everything Barbara needed. Not because he was any less busy than they were (far from it, in fact), but because of his devotion to their mother. His support helped extend her life for more than a decade.

I've witnessed first-hand the same level of love and commitment to his two stepdaughters, Mary Clare and Annie. Upon dating their mother for several years, he became a part of their lives at an early age and they are beyond blessed with a loving man who has raised them as his own. While his relationship their mother ended years ago, he has never stopped acting as their father. Their birth father has been abusive and unreliable their entire lives and they have told me they consider David to be their father. They find comfort and security in knowing they can always count on him for anything they have ever or will ever need.

His compassion and loyalty is also ever present with his friends and close acquaintances. We lost a very dear friend to a rare cancer three months ago. As we sat on either side of her as she was near death, David made a promise to watch over the love of her life, Larry, also a dear friend of ours. David is in very regular contact with him, always checking on how he is doing and asking if he needs anything. Larry is a highly successful businessman and respected member of his community. His network of friends and acquaintances spans nationally; however, he will readily tell anyone who will listen how important David is to him and how much he values their friendship.

Politics is a business like no other. It takes an incredible amount of strength and fortitude to endure and the vast majority of people I've met who have decided to make it their career are dishonest, shallow, money hungry, power seekers. They are in it for all the wrong reasons. David is an absolute anomaly in this industry. He is a champion for Missouri residents and was the driving force in ending mass corruption in statewide government. He has sacrificed much, both personally and professionally, for his lifelong endeavor of doing what is right and working to put like-minded people into office. Many times, this has come at a very high price, but he is not deterred. I've watched him weather multiple attacks and lies on his character from opposing candidates, but I have never seen him waiver because of them. Instead, it makes him want to fight harder for justice, for truth, for the people who have no one else fighting for them. Perhaps that is why it has been so painful to watch him be broken for the first time since I've known him, burdened by the worry of embarrassing his friends, family, and colleagues over this situation. He is living his greatest fear of letting people down.

My heartfelt wish is that this letter has given you that opportunity to see David for the genuinely incredible man that he is.

Sincerely,

Audra Barklage

Family Photographs







